

REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR JOHN REYNOLDS 14th APRIL

COUNTY COUNCIL CELEBRATES SUCCESS IN INCREASING LEVELS OF CYCLING

Cycling trips in and around Cambridge have soared by 14 per cent in a year according to surveys undertaken recently as part of the County Council's annual traffic monitoring report. The figures also revealed an amazing 21 per cent rise in cycling trips from the surrounding villages into the city.

A major contributor to the steep rise in trips is the significant investments in cycling in the Cambridge area in recent years. As one of Cycling England's 'Cycling Towns' £9 million was invested between 2008 and 2011 to provide 14 new and improved cycle routes, events and promotions, and cycle training for adults and children as part of the Cycle Cambridge project delivered in partnership with other local Councils and key partners such as Sustrans.

Counts are taken each year across a standard set of sampling points in the City. In 2010 29,388 cyclists crossed these points on a single day, and the figure for the same locations rose to 33,518 in 2011. The rise in cycling trips is also confirmed by data from an array of automatic counters across the city which return information on a daily basis. Cycling as a percentage of all traffic rose to 22 per cent reinforcing Cambridge's position as the cycling capital of the UK.

Improvements on routes into Cambridge from Histon, Cottenham, Horningsea, Cherry Hinton and Harston have been made, as well as the opening of the cycleway on the maintenance track alongside the Busway which now brings cyclists into the city from both the north and the south.

The County Council continues to invest in cycling across the County as part of its Market Towns Transport Strategy work and this includes improved links to schools and workplaces, as well as the establishment of cycle forums as a means to engage with local cyclists. The County Council will be offering countywide free cycle training to year 6 children from September having successfully obtained a Department for Transport grant.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said "I am delighted that the investment in cycling has increased levels of cycling further in the Cambridge area, which was a major challenge when such high levels already existed. Cycling plays such a vital part in tackling congestion in the Cambridge area to ensure that the city is able to function and keep moving. The County Council will continue to work towards improved safety for cyclists, and to invest in sustainable transport options to ensure that people are able to live healthy and independent lives."

COUNCIL'S BLUE PRINT FOR SUCCESS

The Council are pleased to provide you with a link to the online, easy navigation version of the Full Integrated Plan, which is being officially launched. The online version can be found at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/integratedplan and is designed to be accessible and easy to read, with hyperlinks in the contents table/index of tables to take you to relevant pages.

The Integrated Plan is the Council's blueprint for success, focusing on locally led change with Members at the heart of that process in their local communities. The Plan is built on a commitment to demonstrate strong leadership, innovation and investment in Cambridgeshire, and reflects our desire to be bold, ambitious, and to work together to build a strong future.

BETTER BUS BOOST IS JUST THE TICKET FOR TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENTS

Bus services in and around Cambridge have been given a massive £5 million boost after a successful bid for Government funding which will see hundreds of thousands more bus trips. Cambridgeshire County Council has been told by Government that a £1.7 million bid for the Better Bus Area Fund led by the authority has been successful and unlocks further millions of pounds of funding.

The money will help improve bus journeys, make it easier for passengers to access services and reduce pollution in the historic Cambridge city centre. Cambridgeshire already bucks the national trend for increasing bus patronage and new measures would see up to 518,000 more passenger journeys over the two years of the bid. The key element of the Better Bus Areas Fund bid is a package of measures in Cambridge city centre and on four of the key radial routes for bus services in the city (Hills Road, Mill Road, Histon Road and Milton Road).

In addition, bus information screens will be provided in the Grand Arcade and on Petty Cury, and Smartcard machines will be provided in the city centre and at Cambridge Station. Together, these measures will improve journey times and the reliability of services, and should allow the continuation of the significant growth in bus patronage in the city that has been seen in the past ten years.

A further element of the bid will introduce rural interchange sites in three villages in South Cambridgeshire, Cambourne, Sawston and Linton. These will include a secure parking and cycle parking provision, and will allow people to link with local services provided by taxis, community transport providers, and for drop off trips.

As a partner in the bid, Stagecoach East have committed to replace the oldest buses in their Cambridge fleet (which run on the Citi 2 route) with new buses that meet the Euro V emissions standard for emissions. This major investment will mean that over 90% of bus mileage in the city will be made by buses meeting the Euro IV or Euro V standards. This will significantly improve air quality in the city centre.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "This is great news for Cambridgeshire and reflects the County Councils drive to improve all forms of transport. Cambridgeshire has been at the forefront of increasing passenger numbers and this bid will see hundreds of thousands of more trips not just in Cambridge but in the rural areas as well. Keeping Cambridgeshire moving and reducing congestion is key to supporting local business and enterprise. These new measures will create more bus trips, make it easier for passengers to access services and reduce pollution.

WORKS ON NEW BUSWAY DROP OFF POINT FOR SWAVESEY DUE TO START

Work to build a drop off point at Swavesey for The Busway started on March 26. The works consist of the drop off area with a separate entrance and exit with disabled facilities and an all-weather link to the Busway. Also included as part of the works is a new area of hard standing for users boarding and alighting from southbound buses on the Over Road and additional cycle parking facilities to help relieve the current well used provision at Swavesey Busway stop.

Local Cambridgeshire County Councillor Mandy Smith, Local Member for Papworth and Swavesey, said: "I am glad that work is now set to start on this facility which will help even more people use the Busway. I am pleased that the Council has listened to local councillors and I would like to thank Martin Bentley of the MG Owners Club for his help. The facility means better access for the Busway which has been highly successful."

The scheme has been possible with the help of Martin Bentley of the nearby MG Owners Club, who said, "There is a clear need for a safe and proper Drop Off at the Swavesey junction and I am pleased to help with financial support for the work. Also I would like to say this is a great example of how well local business can work within the community and my offer was acted upon speedily and professionally by all concerned."

BUS BOOST COULD SEE BUSWAY SERVICES STRETCH ACROSS THE COUNTY

A successful bid for a Government grant could help see the already highly successful Busway extend services across the County. Cambridgeshire County Council has been told by Government that a bid from the Better Bus Area Fund led by the authority has been successful and unlocks further millions of pounds of funding. Plans to look at extending some peak Busway journey's as far as Chatteris, Peterborough and Ramsey form part of a massive package of proposals to improve bus services to Cambridge.

The bid was led by Cambridgeshire County Council in partnership with South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridge City Council and bus operators Stagecoach East and Whippet Coaches Ltd. This will help provide more services to rural areas and help give the opportunity for further transport links.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "This is great news and reflects the County Councils drive to improve all forms of transport. The Busway is highly successful and we welcome Stagecoach East's willingness to experiment with new linking services. This has always been one of the added bonuses of the Busway that additional services from rural and remote parts of the County could benefit. If successful these could create further transport links or provide even more commercial incentive for further bus services."

CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH SUPERFAST BROADBAND PROJECT GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

In August 2011 Cabinet agreed to invest up to a total of £20m to support the rollout of superfast broadband services in Cambridgeshire to act as a further stimulus for growth across the County. This is in addition to the funding allocation to Local Authorities being distributed nationally by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport via Broadband UK (BDUK). The BDUK funding allocation to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is expected to be £6.75m. It is anticipated that this combined national and local government investment will in turn generate significant private sector investment to provide a long-term and sustainable improvement to Cambridgeshire's broadband infrastructure.

The target for the project is to ensure access to superfast broadband (defined as at least 25Mbps and upwards) to at least 90% of Cambridgeshire premises and better broadband to all others by 2015. The purpose of the project is to help drive economic growth in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough as well as supporting the health and well being of communities.

The key benefits are:

- * Helping to make Cambridgeshire an attractive location for new businesses by consolidating, enhancing and spreading the reputation of Cambridge and the surrounding area for technology innovation and enterprise by ensuring a "Connected Cambridgeshire" with 21st Century digital infrastructure services

- * Ensuring that Cambridgeshire businesses have access to superfast broadband services to help them compete and succeed in a globally competitive economy

- * Facilitating remote and home working through improved broadband coverage across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough with consequent reduction in traffic congestion and other inhibitors to growth
- * Targeted support to businesses to help them exploit the potential of superfast broadband
- * Enabling streamlined and innovative public service delivery, including support for an ageing population, via tele-health and other initiatives
- * Helping to improve the life chances of all residents by maximising digital inclusion and ensuring that all Cambridgeshire communities, including the most deprived, have access to digital services
- * Improving access to on-line and home based training, education and life-long learning opportunities.

Following initial work undertaken by two advisory groups and the Cambridgeshire County Council project team, a twin track approach has been formulated which will enable a long-term and sustainable improvement to Cambridgeshire's broadband infrastructure.

The twin track approach includes a programme of demand stimulation and registration alongside the competition process to identify an investment partner to deliver the broadband infrastructure. In order to ensure best value for the investment of public funds and to comply with European Union competition and procurement legislation, a formal procurement process will be undertaken with the aim of awarding a contract or contracts to the successful bidder. Meeting the target delivery date of 2015 will be challenging and it is imperative that the project is supported by an efficient and effective decision-making process.

JIGSAW CAMBRIDGESHIRE PROJECT HELPS DIG SOCIETY PIECE TOGETHER PAST

A groundbreaking project in Cambridgeshire to help communities get to grips with their local archaeology was officially launched today, Tuesday, March 27 in Cambridge. Oxford Archaeology East and Cambridgeshire County Council have been awarded a £360,000 cash grant by the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Jigsaw Cambridgeshire community archaeology project.

The project is in response to feedback from Cambridgeshire's communities that they want to get more involved in local archaeology. Already community groups have come forward and the Jigsaw team are helping them run their own archaeology projects. The grant will support community archaeology in Cambridgeshire for five years and should be the start of very exciting times for anyone who is already involved in archaeology or would like to follow up an interest in archaeology.

Two well-attended training courses on artefact identification and aerial photography have already taken place, with a further seven courses open to the public planned for the rest of the year, including a talk by Stewart Ainsworth of Time Team in May.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "Cambridgeshire is full of history and it is something that binds local communities together. Our archaeology events are very well attended and this money will help strengthen the work we are already carrying out with our partners in the community. Archaeology Action Groups will be set up throughout the county, in each of the five districts, so wherever you live the project can offer something for you."

Jigsaw is a 5 year scheme, running until August 2016.

For further details on Jigsaw please contact: the Jigsaw Community Archaeologists: Joanna Richards and Jemima Woolverton on 01223 850541/2 or check out <http://jigsawcambs.org/>.

TAPPING INTO LATEST TECHNOLOGY TO DETER THIEVES

The County Council's Rights of Way and Access Team are tapping into the latest crime fighting technology to help deter metal thieves who have been stealing gates and barriers across Cambridgeshire. Despite being a small county, Cambridgeshire has the second largest byway mileage in England. The network is enjoyed by walkers, cyclists, riders and responsible trail riders and 4 x 4 drivers. But to avoid abuse of the network and damage to the surface, especially during the winter months, gates and barriers are used to restrict access during certain periods – but the metal barriers have become a target for thieves who have stolen gates or parts and caused damaged at a number of sites. In total there are around 100 byway barriers in Cambridgeshire.

The County Council's rights of Way Team has been working with Cambridgeshire Police to deter and detect the thefts and the latest weapon in their armoury is to forensically mark gates and barriers with Smartwater – signs will warn would be thieves that the metal barriers have been marked.

Cambridgeshire police have launched a crackdown on metal theft called Operation Magnet. As part of the operation they are asking scrap metal dealers to sign up to a new scheme which commits them to making it easier for police to trace sellers of stolen metal but will not inhibit those who operate legitimately.

CONTACT CENTRE TAKES THE BELL FOR SPORT RELIEF

More than 160 volunteers took 1646 calls through the night at Cambridgeshire County Council's Contact Centre to help Sport Relief raise £59,146. Volunteers worked through the evening and was one of 14 centres still open at 1am taking calls for the charity which helps causes in the UK and abroad. Volunteers included County Council employees, friends and family as well as councillors from across the parties. Many dressed up for the occasion.

Cambridgeshire County Councillor and Deputy Leader Mac McGuire, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, was there on the night and said: "There was a real team effort through out the night as volunteers did their bit for Sport Relief. Helping charities like this is part of the Council's commitment to use its facilities for the greater good of our communities and I am really pleased we were able to help this good cause. The Centre deals with around 44,000 customer contacts a month and we were well placed to take on this challenge. The volunteers all seemed keen to repeat the experience next year when Comic Relief does Red Nose Day."

DEVELOPING CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTHWATCH

The Government's Health and Social Care Bill introduces significant changes to patient and service user advice, signposting and advocacy. HealthWatch England (HWE) will be created from October 2012 as a new independent consumer champion and a statutory part of the Care Quality Commission (CQC), to champion service users and carers across health and social care.

HWE will be complemented by Local HealthWatch (LHW) organisations, established by local authorities. Local HealthWatches will ensure views and feedback from patients and carers are an integral part of local commissioning across health and social care. LHW organisations will replace Local Involvement Networks (LINKs),

also commissioned by local authorities, from April 2013. LHW will be funded by and accountable to local authorities, and will be involved in local authorities' new partnership functions.

Local HealthWatch will:

- * Retain LINKs' existing responsibilities to promote patient and public involvement and to seek views on services which can be fed back into local commissioning
- * Have continued rights to enter and view provider services
- * Continue to be able to comment on changes to local services
- * Continue to take an interest in the NHS Constitution.

They will also gain additional functions and funding including:

- * Supporting individuals to exercise choice by signposting them to services. In particular, they will support people who lack the means or capacity to make choices
- * Local HealthWatch will be able to report concerns about the quality of local health and social care services to HealthWatch England, independently of their local authority. HealthWatch England will be able recommend that the Care Quality Commission takes action
- * A HealthWatch member will also sit on the Health and Wellbeing Board so the community has a say in local decisions.

Local authorities will also have a new responsibility to commission NHS complaints advocacy services. These can be commissioned from Local HealthWatch or another suitable provider.

The Department of Health (DH) will provide unringfenced funding to all top-tier local authorities to commission a local HealthWatch in their area. The basic funding will be the same level as for Cambridgeshire LINK (currently approximately £200,000, with £165,883 provided to Cambridgeshire ACRE, who act as host for the LINK) but there will be additional funding for signposting and advocacy. The level of this additional funding is to be confirmed, but is likely to approximately double the current level of funding. Start-up funding, expected to be between £15,000 and £25,000, will be provided to the Council for the set-up of HealthWatch.

The Council is required to establish Local HealthWatch by April 2013. The HealthWatch Workstream Group of officers has considered a number of options for this process, including a formal tendering process; the Council acting to establish a separate organisation; and commissioning another organisation to establish Local HealthWatch. The following factors affected the proposal:

- * Legal advice from Local Government Shared Services suggests that a tender process would not be possible for Local HealthWatch
- * The need to ensure a continued LINK service until April 2013
- * The need to ensure a smooth transition from the existing service to Local HealthWatch, whilst ensuring that HealthWatch is perceived as a new and separate organisation from Cambridgeshire LINK
- * A lack of clear guidance from the Department of Health and the expectation that further guidance will be released in 2012
- * The lack of a clear market for HealthWatch services and the need for HealthWatch to be a separate organisation in its own right led to the conclusion that a tender process may lead to no suitable bidders coming forward.

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HAVE YOUR SAY ON NEW STRATEGY TO REDUCE DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

A consultation has been launched across Cambridgeshire to help further reduce the level of domestic abuse and sexual violence in the county. Over recent years a partnership in the county has been highly successful in reducing the harms, risks and cost associated with domestic abuse and sexual violence by working together to take a co-ordinated approach to providing support and services.

The revised strategy is now out for consultation with the partners involved in the Cambridgeshire Domestic Abuse Partnership - which includes the County Council, Cambridgeshire Police, Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board and Community Safety Partnerships - and the public are also being invited to have their say.

County Council Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Tony Orgee, said: "This new strategy represents our commitment as a county. The aims are aligned with national and local priorities and build in the successes achieved so far across Cambridgeshire.

"There is no room for complacency. The issues surrounding domestic abuse and sexual violence have an impact on all sectors of society and implications for many agencies including adult services, children and young people's services, criminal justice, health, substance misuse and housing - and we need to ensure we are working together to help those who suffer domestic abuse and sexual violence in every way we can within the resources available to us."

The consultation period runs until April 24 and details of the strategy and how to comment can be found at:

<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/community/safercommunities/domestic/>

Each year nationally, one million women suffer domestic abuse, and 300,000 women are sexually abused. 1 in 4 women are predicted to experience domestic abuse in their lifetime. Each day in Cambridgeshire, more than 20 incidents of domestic abuse are reported to the police.

According to the British Crime Survey, last year in Cambridgeshire 7% of women and 5% of men were victims of domestic abuse, and 3% of women and 1% of men were victims of some form of sexual violence. It is estimated that only 25% of people who suffer domestic abuse at the hands of their partner will report it to the police, while only 10% of serious sexual assaults are reported to police.

A SUNSHINE HARVEST ON THE COUNTY FARMS ESTATE

Cambridgeshire County Council's Farms Estate is celebrating the successful installation of solar panels on four barn roofs. Panels are now up and generating electricity on tenant farms at Ramsey, Parsons Drove, Littleport and Shingay near Bassingbourn. The panels are already reaping returns and are projected to produce 70,000 kilowatt hours (kwh) per year over the 25 years of the Governments Feed in Tariff scheme, that's enough to supply 20 houses each year.

Although only erected a month ago, the four sites have already produced more than 4,000 kwh, saving 2.4 tonnes of carbon being released into the atmosphere. The tenant farmers at each site will use this energy, with any surplus being exported to the National Grid. The Cambridgeshire Farms Estate has 13,500ha and 250 tenant farmers, making it the largest of its kind in England and Wales.

£9.9m CAMBRIDGESHIRE BID FOR DROUGHT DAMAGED ROAD REPAIRS

The County Council has submitted a bid for £9.9 million of Department for Transport cash to repair drought damage which has affected almost 10% of the roads in Cambridgeshire. Cambridgeshire County Council has joined forces with four other local authorities across the region to assess the level of damage to the highway network and submit bids for government funding to carry out repairs.

In Cambridgeshire, the drought has damaged some 414 kilometres of the 4,342 kilometres of roads which are the responsibility of the County Council. The impact of the drought has been greatest in the fenland area, but roads in non Fenland areas have also been damaged.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "The state of some roads in Cambridgeshire is causing us real concern. The persistent drought means the soil shrinks under the road surface which cracks and becomes uneven, making the road less safe for all users. The scale of the damage is beyond anything which can be funded locally if we are to continue to meet all the other demands on our highway maintenance and improvement budget and I am hopeful that the Government will recognise the scale of the drought which has had such an impact on the highway network not just in Cambridgeshire, but across the whole of the region."

TAKE A FREE SPRING SPIN ON A BICK TO EASE YOUR COMMUTE

With Spring in the air commuters are invited to a free event on Wednesday 18 April to find out more about how to cycle to work. The 'Get Cycling' event gives commuters a hands-on opportunity to try out a range of commuter-friendly bicycles without the need to make a special visit to the bike shop. They can also find out how cycling can ease their travel to work stresses, save them money, make them fitter and reduce their environmental impact. The event is being run by Travel Plan Plus (TP+), a Cambridgeshire Travel for Work Partnership project based in the Science Park area. It is sponsored by Napp Pharmaceuticals.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "This is our third Get Cycling event and is a must attend event for anyone who wants to start cycling, but doesn't quite know how. If you are thinking about cycling to work or for leisure, this event will help you decide which bike suits you best. There will be many bikes available for new and novice cyclists, including road, commuter, fold-up and hybrid bikes. In addition experts will be on hand to answer cycling questions and provide advice. Cycling not only reduces congestion and pollution but is also a healthy way of travelling about the County."

This free lunchtime event will take place between 11am and 3pm on Wednesday, April 18 at Napp, 196 Cambridge Science Park. Anybody working in the TP+ area is welcome to attend. TP+ covers employers based on the Cambridge Science Park, Cambridge Business Park and St John's Innovation Park, plus Cambridge Regional College and Taylor Vinters Solicitors.

For more information contact TP+ on 01223 427053 or email tony.clayton@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

RECYCLING CENTRES CAN HELP WITH YOUR SPRING CLEAN

This time of year is traditionally when residents get ready to spring clean their home - to help recycling centres across the county have extended their opening times and will be open this Easter weekend to take bulky rubbish and recycling. The centres are now on their summer opening times so people have more time to recycle their waste. The opening hours for local sites from 1st April are as follows:

Milton Mon-Fri 9am to 8pm, Sat-Sun 9am to 6pm
St Neots Mon - Sun 8am to 6pm
Thriplow Mon - Sun 8am to 5pm

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "If you are planning to have a clear out this Easter weekend or tackle some DIY task don't forget your local recycling centre accepts a huge range of items for recycling including plasterboard, timber, garden waste, cardboard, metal, and hardcore as well as more commonplace materials such as glass bottles and metal cans. To make sure your visit is even easier, you should separate your waste into different types before you visit your local centre.

"We have a great recycling record in Cambridgeshire and this is down to our residents who take real care to divide their rubbish and recycling on the kerbside as well as use our recycling centres. I am sure in the future we will continue to excel."

For more information on where your nearest recycling centre is and what waste is accepted, visit www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/environment/recycling or call 0345 045 5207.

CHANGE IN LAW AFFECTING THE DISPLAY OF TOBACCO

Cambridgeshire Trading Standards are reminding large stores that as of last Friday (6 April), it became illegal to display tobacco products at the point of sale.

Major stores are no longer able to have tobacco products on show for customers to see, but instead they need to be covered or screened off, allowing only limited, temporary exposure for the purposes of serving customers. Each year thousands of children and young people in the UK start smoking and research has found that point of sale display has a direct impact on young people's smoking.

It also become an offence for staff in major stores to show tobacco products to people under the age of 18, in addition to the current offence of selling tobacco products to them. There are also new provisions relating to tobacco price lists. These new laws apply to shop premises where the retail area exceeds 280 sq metres (those shops covered by Sunday Trading restrictions) with the exception of specialist and bulk tobacconists, but the same restrictions will come in for all shops and businesses, including pubs, clubs, specialist and bulk tobacconists, from 6 April 2015.

TRADING STANDARDS SEIZE POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS LIGHTERS

Cambridgeshire County Council Trading Standards Officers supported by the police, seized more than 100 potentially dangerous lighters during an operation at Bourn Market on Bank Holiday Monday. The giant Midi lighters were confiscated from several stalls and one trader has been warned he could face prosecution. This type of lighter breaches the General Product Safety Regulations 2005. Because they contain much more fuel than ordinary lighters they have the potential to be an explosive hazard.

Head of Cambridgeshire Trading Standards, said: "We believe that the lighters seized at Bourn Market are potentially dangerous and we will now have them tested to establish that they do indeed breach the regulations. Similar lighters produced by the same manufacturer which have been confiscated in other parts of the country have proved to be an illegal product."

Cambridgeshire Trading Standards will also now make enquiries to see where the lighters came from to try and prevent more being imported into the UK.

“Cambridgeshire Trading Standards will continue to ensure that unsafe products are removed from the market place to protect local people and those who travel from much further afield to attend this type of bank holiday market,” added Leon Livermore.

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As you may know my wife Diana & I puppy walk trainee Guide Dogs for the Blind. Below is the latest letter from our new puppy Gus.

GUS THE NEW GUIDE DOG PUPPY

Hi everyone my name is Gus and I have come to live with grandma and granddad, my puppy walkers when I was only 7 weeks old. My mum is a black Labrador and my dad is a Golden Retriever, I have 9 brothers and sisters, 5 of us are black like mum and five are golden like dad. I did miss them at first but now I love living in Bar Hill. I go shopping with grandma to Tesco's which is great fun as lots of people make a fuss of me and tell me I am gorgeous which I already know. I can find my way back home again, I go much faster going back so that I can have a nice snooze in my bed, it is very tiring being admired but I love it.

I have a special friend called Nelson he is three weeks younger than me and we play together a lot, I taught Nelson to cry at the door to go out to spend whenever he wants a treat and not to wait until he needs to go out. He taught me a good game you creep out of the room when our humans go out and forget to close the door properly then you find somewhere to hide and start to cry very loudly. Our humans think we are hurt and search frantically for us then when they find us give us an extra special treat and make a great fuss of us.

I also went to Peterborough to play with my sister Becky, we had great fun playing together before we went out for lunch with our humans, we had a little noisy conversation in the pub at first but as we were rather tired we went to sleep all through lunch although we made sure we were fed before we let our humans eat. On the way home we both decided we were too exhausted to walk so went on sit down strike to make our human's carry us. We made sure we wiped our muddy paws all over their clothes, after all they have shoes to keep their feet clean and we don't get anything.

I am going to stay with some other puppy walkers for a few days while grandma and granddad help my Auntie Debbie move house so I will have lots of fun playing with my friends.

Grandma said to tell you that Vania her last puppy has settled down in big dog school and shares her kennel with two boy dogs. When I go to school I hope I can share with two girls but I won't be going yet as I have a lot of important things to learn first.

When you read this I will be 18 weeks old and getting very grown up. Lots of happy barks and licks from Gus.